

THE Austin Water Block Leader Program

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Austin's Drought Contingency Plan states that the City Manager may consider water use restrictions in response to supply or demand conditions. The supply trigger for Stage 2 is a combined storage level of less than 900,000 acre-feet in lakes Travis and Buchanan. Because the lakes were expected to reach that level and no significant rainfall was forecast, the City Manager announced in August that he would implement Stage 2 effective September 4, 2012. **Watering schedules can change. Always check our website at WaterWiseAustin.org or call 974-2199 to determine your correct watering day!**



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Water use management strategy

In the summer of 2012, the Austin City Council voted 6-0 to revise the City's water use management strategy. This strategy is made up of two parts: the Water Conservation Code and the Drought Contingency Plan. Both documents together outline how commercial and residential customers of the City's water utility may use water in and around their homes and businesses.

With this updated strategy, Austin Water is strengthening conservation efforts while also protecting the City's urban landscape and tree canopy. Water conservation efforts, including policies for responsible outdoor water use, help maximize limited resources as Austin's population grows. This

strategy ensures an adequate water supply during times of drought for public health and safety needs, such as firefighting.

Highlights of the updated water use management strategy include:

- A default conservation stage that allows for two-day-a-week watering
- Four drought stages that ramp up water use restrictions during times of drought to maximize water conservation
- Provisions for watering trees and vegetable gardens during droughts

The stages mentioned above are aligned with drought triggers such as lake levels and/or water consumption.





WaterWise landscape rebate

Austin Water has revamped the popular WaterWise Landscape rebate which offers cash back to customers who replace thirsty grass with native plants. The rebate also covers installing permeable hardscape (any area such as decomposed granite, gravel, mulch, etc., that allows rain to penetrate into the soil, but will not require any supplemental irrigation).

The program requires a minimum 500 sq. ft. to be converted. Residential properties may receive \$25 for every 100 sq. ft. converted from turf grass to native plant bed and permeable hardscape. The maximum rebate amount is \$1,250. Applications will be accepted twice per year, December 1 – March 31 for spring installations and June 1 – September 30 for fall installations. Note: the Fall 2012 application deadline will be extended to October 19 THIS YEAR ONLY. For eligibility and other program requirements, call 974-2199 or visit: www.WaterWiseAustin.org.

Saving water now, means a better wastewater rate next year

Austin Water calculates wastewater costs based on the amount of water used during three fall or winter billing periods. Wastewater rates are based on your average water use for three months. These three periods occur between mid-November and mid-March of each year. (Note: Months must have water usage to be considered in the averaging calculation, otherwise a default average may result). Visit: www.WaterWiseAustin.org for information on upcoming 2012-2013 wastewater averaging periods.

Austin Water conducts wastewater averaging in the late fall and winter months because less outdoor water is used during this time; this better determines the actual indoor wastewater amounts that are returned to the wastewater system.

Stop the grease blob

Austin Water responds to many grease-related sewer backups. In fact, just last year, the City spent more than \$13,000 to repair sewer lines clogged by improperly disposed grease.

Don't Pour Grease Down the Sink

Instead, you should cool it, contain it and throw it in the trash. *Can it. Bag it. Toss it. Don't Clog it.* Running hot water to melt fats, oil, and grease doesn't help! No amount of hot water keeps grease from eventually congealing. This only gets the grease through the pipes in your home. Once it gets into the sewer and cools, it sticks to the pipe walls and creates an expensive and messy problem of sewer backups for you, your neighbors, and creeks and rivers in your neighborhood.

To learn more, visit: www.austintexas.gov/departments/stop-grease-blob



New and improved irrigation rebate

Residential Austin Water and qualifying water provider customers may receive up to \$400 in rebates for making improvements to their existing irrigation systems. The program has been revised to make participation easier than ever; so don't just fix your irrigation system, upgrade it!

The rebate program is for existing irrigation systems only; new systems and/or expansions are not eligible. A licensed irrigator or the homeowner must complete the work that will be rebated. Once the work is complete, submit the completed application and itemized receipts within 30 days. The application can be found online and will always contain up-to-date information about the program.



Want more rebates?

Austin Water also offers rebates for high efficiency clothes washers and rain harvesting systems.

Add a **timer** to your hose-end sprinkler, and make following the watering schedule a little easier. Austin Water is offering rebates for the purchase of up to two hose timers.



Learn more by visiting WaterWiseAustin.org or calling 974-2199.

FREE water conservation tools

Austin Water is here to help you save water inside and outside the home with these *free* water-saving tools.



Free Soil Moisture Meters

Make the most of your outdoor watering with a free soil moisture meter: an easy-to-read device that measures the relative moisture of your soil.



Free Treegators®

To help keep young trees healthy, we are offering free Treegators, which are slow release watering bags that evenly deliver water to a tree's roots without run-off or evaporation.



Free Faucet Aerators and Showerheads

Residential customers may increase their homes' water savings by installing efficient showerheads and faucet aerators.

Pick up one of these free items (for Austin Water customers) between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 625 E. 10th Street, 1st floor Customer Service office.



Rebate Central

For more information about Austin Water programs, contact us at 974-2199 or watercon@austintexas.gov

First waterWise hotel named in Austin

On July 26, 2012, Homewood Suites by Hilton Austin South, a 96-room hotel located at 4143 Governors Row, earned Austin Water's first WaterWise Hotel Partnership. Hotel staff was excited to learn about this program and eager to work with Austin Water staff to find ways to improve water efficiency at their hotel. Increasing efficiency conserves water while also lowering a hotel's operating costs.

To save water, the hotel:

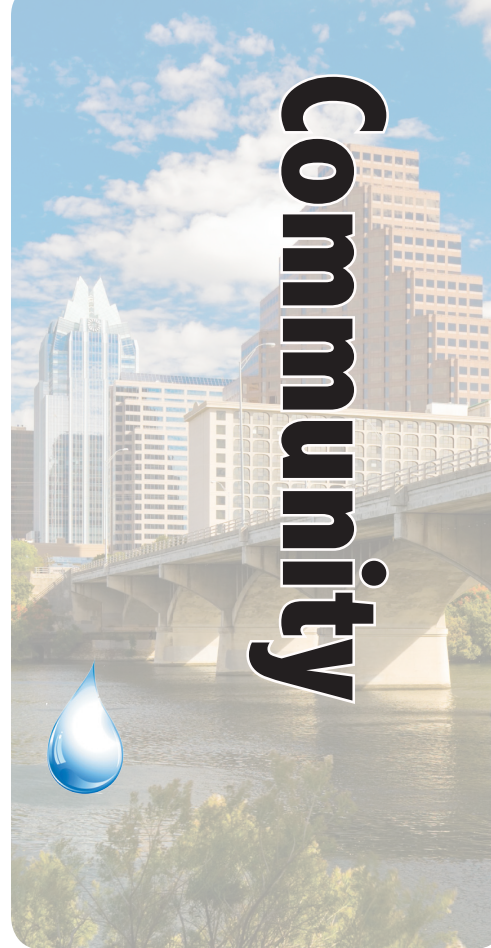
- replaced faucet aerators that used 2 gallons per minute with ones using only 1 gallon per minute in guest bathrooms and kitchens, and staff bathrooms;
- used an Energy Star labeled commercial dishwasher;
- installed an efficient pre-wash spray valve on the dishwashing station;
- has an air-cooled rather than a water-cooled icemaker in the kitchen;
- maintains mulch levels in all landscape beds to retain moisture; and
- regularly checks for leaking equipment by using a preventative maintenance schedule.

Through an irrigation evaluation, Homewood Suites staff learned about upgrades that could be made to the irrigation system to make it more water efficient. While looking at the irrigation system, staff also found a previously undetected water leak on the hotel grounds. The irrigation system upgrade and repair of the leak are currently underway.



From left to right: Lloyd Cannon, Chief Engineer; Elizabeth Jackson, General Manager; Heather Dalrymple, Austin Water

Water savings for participating hotels will vary widely depending on the efficiency measures already in place. Because efficiency requirements for plumbing fixtures have increased over the years, older hotels that have not been recently renovated will typically see greater water savings. You can learn more about this program at www.austintexas.gov/departments/waterwise-hotel-partnership. Rebates may be available from Austin Water to assist with making water-efficient improvements.



Grow Green Homeowner's Landscape Training

Garden Tour/Meet the Experts/Plant Swap
Thursday, October 18, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Join the City of Austin Grow Green team for our FREE homeowner's landscape training. In celebration of Texas Native Plant Week this event will also include a plant swap and tours of the One Texas Center demonstration gardens led by landscape architects. The event is free, but attendees must pre-register at: www.eventbrite.com/event/4338851622

Many communities will be hosting Native Plant Week events to foster the use of native plants in the landscape. As the week of October 14-20 approaches, check out the Watershed Protection's website at: www.austintexas.gov/NativePlantWeek for events in your area.